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ABSTRACT

This study of commuting student use of public libraries was confined to certain key public libraries in the New York counties of Orange, Rockland, Sullivan and a section of Ulster. The purpose of this preliminary enquiry was to determine: (1) what students use public library services, how often and what materials are sought, (2) the attitudes of student users of public libraries vs. attitudes towards their academic libraries, (3) the degree of hardship imposed upon local public libraries by student demands, (4) how well the public library fills student demands, and (5) the possibility of further study into the relationship of the public library to the educational system as structured by the New York State Education Department. Study data were collected through: a review of literature pertaining to library services to commuting students, interviews with public library directors in key areas and with a random selection of commuting students, and visits to small public libraries. This enquiry showed that the library uses of the college student are a matter of community concern because responsibility cannot be successfully consigned to the college at which he is matriculated, and that more consideration of this neglected problem is needed. Specific recommendations are made for additional studies and surveys. (Author/JB)

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STUDIES IN INTERLIBRARY RELATIONS

Number One

Basil Mitchell, Editor

LI001862

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Library Service for Commuting Students
A Preliminary Study of Problems in Four Southeastern New York Counties

by

Matilda A. Gocek

Southeastern New York Library Resources Council
103 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601

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Author's Foreword

On March 26, 1968, the Board of Trustees of the Southeastern New York Library Resources Council authorized the appointment of a Committee on Library Services to Commuting Students and Faculties. Mr. Leon Karpel, who was at that time president of the Board, appointed the following:

Mr. William J. Nichols, Director of the Library of Dutchess Community College, *Chairman*
Mrs. Matilda A. Gocek, Librarian of the Tuxedo Park Library
Mr. James Brock, Assistant Director of the Adriance Memorial Library
Mrs. Paul Dumond, Director of the Ellenville Public Library
Mrs. Marguerite B. Hubbard, Readers' Service Librarian, Vassar College Library
Mrs. Elizabeth B. Phelps, Reference Librarian of Rockland Community College
Mrs. Joanne H. Rein, Serials Librarian, Library of the State University of New York College at New Paltz
Mr. Gordon L. Kidd, Director of Library Services of Ulster County Community College

Convening for the first time at Dutchess Community College on October 3, 1968, the Committee accepted the charge to "assess the extent and the importance of the problem of serving commuting students and faculties in public libraries".

The Committee took note of certain evidences associated with a large, mobile college population: (a) complaints from public librarians of various pressures on services and facilities associated with heavy use by college students, and (b) the expressed opinion by both public and academic librarians that college students should be more familiar with the library resources available at their own institutions.

By February of 1969 we began to appreciate the amount of time and effort that would be necessary for an adequate study of the geographical distribution of student population throughout the Council's eight counties, the incidence of use of public library facilities by college students, and the characteristics of the library resources and services required. Mr. Nichols invited me to serve with him as Co-Chairman of the Committee. We prepared a survey form to assess the frequency-of-use aspect of the problem. Each member of the Committee was supplied with the form and assigned a geographical area for study.

On April 16, the Committee met to consider the results. The

inadequacy of the approach was made clear, and the need for a more carefully structured investigation was established when Committee members returned with certain impressions, but few statistics: "there was no commuting student library problem at all", "college libraries had no problems with commuting students", and, "public libraries have problems with services to commuting students".

My own observations and some of the findings of this survey seemed to me to confirm that there are circumstances worth considering in the college student use of public libraries, and I determined to investigate these more fully within a limited area. My study was confined to certain key public libraries in the counties of Orange, Rockland, Sullivan and a section of Ulster. It is not, therefore, more than a sampling of certain special situations. It does, however, indicate some of the elements for what I believe must be the eventual methodology for defining the problem so as to meet the needs of a distinct group of library users.

When one becomes interested and involved in the application of any system of analysis to obtain objective answers, there are inevitably some subjective conclusions as well. As a result of this experience, I am firmly convinced that convenience of access to library resources and services is a legitimate public expectation, and that this expectation is being very largely disappointed.

Matilda A. Gocek, Co-chairman
Committee on Library Service to
Commuting Students and Faculties

Tuxedo Park Library
October 1, 1969

This report was presented to the Committee on Library Services to Commuting Students and Faculties on October 31, 1969.
It was accepted and forwarded to the Council's Board of Trustees with the recommendation that it be published.
At a meeting on November 11, 1969, the Board of Trustees authorized its publication as the first of the Executive Director's series, STUDIES IN INTERLIBRARY RELATIONS.

LIBRARY SERVICE FOR COMMUTING STUDENTS

I

Problems in Public Library Services to Commuting Students

The problems of public library services may appear to involve no direct obligations to academic institutions, but the mobility of students has instigated a trend that requires a new concept of library service policies.

> The roles of the public library are changing. The relative inefficiency of complete self-planned instruction and the increasing availability of organized instruction within the community have decreased the function of the public library as the university of the poor. Nevertheless, as educational demands upon the public library by the educational system itself increase, and as the sophistication of the community increases, the public library becomes an essential element within the community as an information reservoir for multiple user groups. (p. 72)[3]

The building of a materials collection to fill the needs of an academic library which serves a curriculum-bound student body and faculty is not immediately comparable with the function of a public library collection which serves reference and research patrons from business and industry, from the professions, from junior colleges, colleges, and universities, to say nothing of high school students working for advanced placement credit in college level courses. The heaviest pressures of services to students inevitably fall on public libraries that have adequate collections, competent interlibrary loan systems, and a staff that has enthusiasm and imagination. The purpose of this preliminary enquiry is to determine:

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[3]Footnote numbers refer to the Bibliography on page 27.

1. *what students use public library services, how often and what materials are sought*

2. *the attitudes of student users of public libraries vs attitudes towards their academic libraries*

3. *the degree of hardship imposed upon local public libraries by student demands for services and materials*

4. *how well the public library fills student demands*

5. *the possibility of further study into the relationship of the public library to the educational system as structured by the New York State Education Department*

For the purposes of this report it is necessary to set forth my own definitions of the following terms:

public library: any library regardless of size, chartered by New York State to serve the general public including public, association, school, district, town, county libraries and library systems.

academic institution: any junior college, four-year college and university offering accredited degrees.

matriculated commuting student: any person regardless of age registered as a non-residential student in an academic institution, full or part-time, working for college credits in undergraduate or advanced degrees.

non-matriculated commuting student: attending academic institutions for vocational and technological courses.

My approach was as follows:

1. Review of literature pertaining to library services to commuting students. (There is little enough of this.)

2. Personal interviews with public library directors in key areas.

3. Personal visits to small public libraries.

4. Personal interviews with a random selection of commuting students.

FORMAT FOR PERSONAL INTERVIEWS
WITH LIBRARY DIRECTORS

1. *Name of library*
2. *Address*
3. *Population served*
4. *Budget - annual*
5. *Circulation for 1968*
6. *Number of professional staff*
7. *Colleges located within area of service*
8. *Colleges located within commuting distances: 25-mile radius*
9. *Types of commuting students served*
10. *Basic needs: reference, materials for general reading, non-book materials*
11. *Cooperation of colleges with area served:*
    Are reading lists supplied?
    Are course offering posted?
    Are duplicate reserve collections lent?
    Do they contribute funds for any materials or staff?
12. *Services to scattered students not tied to area by academic institution or residence.*
    -- one visit needs vs extended attendance
    -- regional research (local history, unique architecture)
13. *Method and extent of Interlibrary Loan Services*
14. *Elements of the problem of service to commuting students:*
    -- Time
    -- Staff
    -- Materials
    -- Costs
15. *Additional comments*

FORMAT FOR INTERVIEWS
WITH COMMUTING STUDENTS

1. *Name of student*

2. *Name of academic institution*

3. *Degree desired*

4. *Part-time or full-time student*

5. *Residence*

6. *Is your college library totally satisfactory?*

   If not, why not?

7. *Materials required: reading lists, supplementary reading, reference and research.*

8. *Why do you travel to a public library?*

9. *What is the greatest distance you have traveled to a public library?*

10. *Elements of student problems:*

    -- *Time*
    -- *Staff*
    -- *Materials*
    -- *Costs*

BASIC SURVEY FORM FILLED AT CHARGING DESK
TO DETERMINE FLOW OF COMMUTING STUDENTS

1. *Name of academic institution*

2. *Degree desired* _____ *Master's* _____ *Doctorate* _____

3. *Use of library:* *once a week* *Yes:* *No:*
once a month *Yes:* *No:*
less frequently: *Yes:* *No:*

4. *Materials borrowed:* *books* _____ *pamphlets* _____
recordings _____ *other* _____

reference use only _____

5. *Have you been provided with Interlibrary Loan Services:*

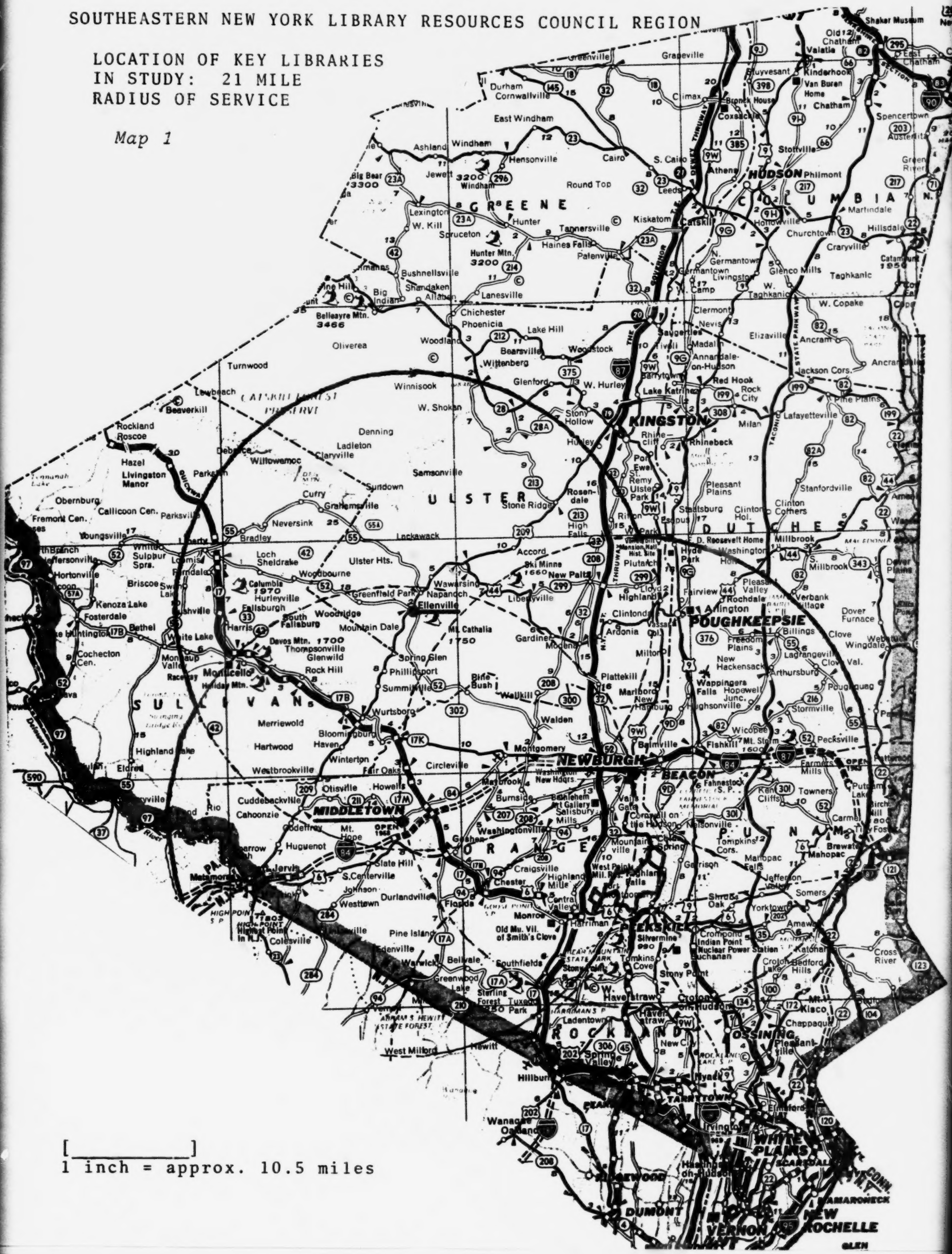
Yes _____ *No* _____

6. *Comments:*

SOUTHEASTERN NEW YORK LIBRARY RESOURCES COUNCIL REGION

LOCATION OF KEY LIBRARIES IN STUDY: 21 MILE RADIUS OF SERVICE

Map 1



KEY LIBRARIES: (4)

Locations noted in Map #1

ELLENVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
Ellenville, New York
Population served: 13,000+
Budget: $74,000+
Circulation: 68,000
Professional staff: 1

THRALL LIBRARY
Middletown, New York
Population served: 26,000
Budget, $133,000
Circulation: 134,132
Professional staff: 3

NEWBURGH FREE LIBRARY
Newburgh, New York
Population served: 67,000
Budget: $307,380.75
Circulation: 201,012
Professional staff: 5

FINKELSTEIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY
Spring Valley, New York
Population served: 50,000
Budget: $430,000
Circulation: 275,000
Professional staff: 10

COLLEGES IN AREA: (16)

Locations noted in Map #2

ORANGE COUNTY:

1 two year public
4 two year private
2 four year private

ULSTER COUNTY:

1 two year public
1 four year public
1 four year private

SULLIVAN COUNTY

1 two year public
1 two year private

ROCKLAND COUNTY:

1 two year public
3 four year public-private

COMMUTING STUDENTS IDENTIFIED

Full-time student at Williams, working during summer in New York City, taking summer night course at Columbia.

Part-time students attending Columbia for Master's degree.

Full-time students attending three community colleges.

Full-time students attending four-year private and public colleges.

Non-matriculated part-time students attending colleges for vocational and technological courses.

SOUTHEASTERN NEW YORK LIBRARY RESOURCES COUNCIL REGION

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Map 2

1. Columbia-Greene Community C.
2. Bard C.
3. Ulster County Community C.
4. Mt. Saint Alphonsus Seminary
5. SUNY College at New Paltz
6. Bennett C.
7. Dutchess Community C.
8. Marist C.
9. Vassar C.
10. Sullivan County Community C.
11. Epiphany Apostolic C.
12. Mt. Saint Mary C.
13. Presentation Jr. C. of the Sacred Heart
14. Orange County Community C.
15. Ladycliff C.
16. St. Pius X Seminary
17. Harriman C.
18. Environmental Medicine Center, New York University
19. Rockland Community C.
20. Nyack Missionary C.
21. Dominican C. of Blauvelt
22. St. Thomas Aquinas C.

II

Findings

What students use public library services, how often, and what materials are sought?

It is impossible in this brief report to define the commuting student population by sex, age, education, occupation, and family income. Such a study is needed.

The identification of the commuting students whose experience and opinions were made available for this investigation was accomplished by key public library directors, heads of key library reference departments, and a short charging desk survey form that was filled out by the student-patrons in one public library.

Indeed, a common element recurrent in public librarians' expressions of dissatisfactions and uncertainties concerning their own service to students is this: *they do not know whom they serve.* Directors answered honestly that they admitted to a service problem, but that their efforts to identify their users in a meaningful way had been less than adequate. Small staffs for too much work are a factor here. Mrs. Marion Dumond, Director of Ellenville Public Library, stated that "the problem defies solution because I can't define the problem".

Mrs. Mattie Gaines, Director of Thrall Library in Middletown, confessed that the overworked Reference Department could not identify residences or academic institutions of the commuting students that used the library.

Mr. Robert Ake, Director of Finkelstein Memorial Library in Spring Valley, said that he probably served students of fifty different colleges within a one-week period because Rockland County has a population growth that is aligned with New York City and northern New Jersey. Two colleges are located directly in the area of his library service boundaries, but he also serves students who attend New York University, Columbia, Hunter, Fordham, Rutgers, Fairleigh Dickinson, Paterson State, etc.* Reference Librarian, Mrs. Elaine Evans, explained that Spring Valley patrons whose needs cannot be filled in Spring Valley prefer to travel to New York City rather than to travel north in search of library facilities.

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*In a spot check of 904 library users in November 1969, the Finkelstein Memorial Library identified 154 matriculated college students. --Editor's note

Mrs. Dora Chu, Reference Librarian of Newburgh Free Library, was the only librarian to report service to students from across the Hudson River, as well as to area college students. As in other libraries, she could not identify in detail who used the library resources.

Who are the students?

Although librarians do not know where the students live and study, they do know the levels of reference and research that students demand. It is interesting that the descriptive analysis is broader in scope than might have been anticipated. In any study of commuting students, the following descriptors would be necessary:

a. Part-time matriculated undergraduates
b. Full-time matriculated undergraduates
c. Non-matriculated technical and vocational undergraduates
d. Full-time Masters and Doctoral candidates
e. Extension Masters and Doctoral candidates
f. Off-campus work credited for graduate degrees
g. Advance placement high school students working for college level credits

Locations of users:

a. Student living at home attending local junior college
b. Student living at home attending four-year college in area
c. Student working in area, residing away from home attending area colleges
d. Scattered students not tied to region by home or academic institution: ie., one-visit reference needs, regional research, historical materials

Map number 3 shows the flow patterns of commuting students who are willing to drive twenty miles if their reference and research needs can be met. Librarians complain of "library-hopping", and the map shows the overlap of territories serviced by the key libraries. There are three factors contributing to the mobility of student library patrons:

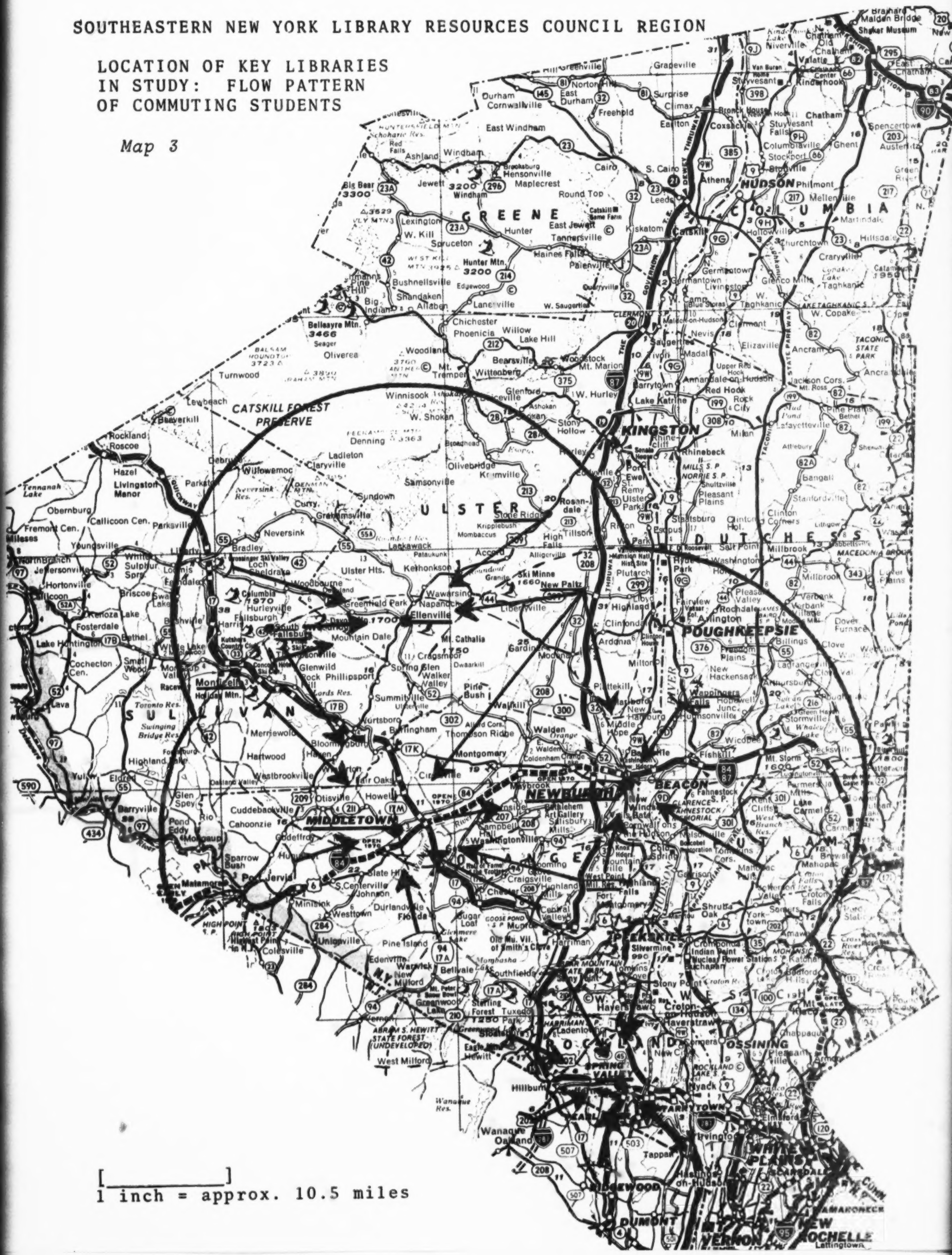
1. If they know that the material they seek is in a particular library

2. If library hours are convenient for their overloaded schedules

SOUTHEASTERN NEW YORK LIBRARY RESOURCES COUNCIL REGION

LOCATION OF KEY LIBRARIES
IN STUDY: FLOW PATTERN
OF COMMUTING STUDENTS

Map 3


GREENE
COLUMBIA
ULSTER
DUTCHESS
SULLIVAN
ORANGE
PUTNAM
ROCKLAND
WESTCHESTER
CATSKILL FOREST PRESERVE
HUDSON
KINGSTON
POUGHKEEPSIE
NEWBURGH
BEACON
MIDDLETOWN
PEEKSKILL
Monticello
Port Jervis
Catskill
Hunter Mtn. 3200
Belleayre Mtn. 3466
Big Bear 3300
Windham 3200
Ski Minne 1660
Mt. Cathalia 1750
Park 1250
Columbia 1970
Greenfield Park 1700
Ellenville
New Paltz
Woodstock
Mt. Tremper
Mt. Marion
Bearsville
Phoenicia
Lexington
Hensonville
Maplecrest
Tannersville
Haines Falls
Palenville
Windham
Ashland
Cairo
Durham
East Durham
Freehold
Surprise
Climax
Coxsackie
Athens
Leeds
Round Top
Germantown
Livingston
Taghkanic
Hillsdale
Chatham
Stuyvesant
Stuyvesant Falls
Columbiaville
Ghent
Stockport
Philmont
Mellenville
Martindale
Churchtown
Craryville
Copake
Ancram
Taconic State Park
Jackson Cors.
Red Hook
Rhinebeck
Milan
Lafayetteville
Millbrook
Millerton
Pine Plains
Bangall
Stanfordville
Clinton Corners
Pleasant Plains
Shultzville
Rhinecliff
Staatsburg
Hyde Park
Rhinebeck
Mills S.P.
Norrie S.P.
Tivoli
Madalin
Elizaville
Annandale-on-Hudson
Barrytown
Lake Katrine
Rock City
Saugerties
Malden-on-Hudson
Clermont
Nevis
Glenco Mills
Taghkanic
W. Copake
Lake Taghkanic S.P.
Blue Stores
Livingston
Germantown
Oliverea
Turnwood
Big Indian
Allaben
Shandaken
Bushnellsville
Lanesville
Edgewood
Spruceton
W. Kill
Lexington
Jewett
East Jewett
Kiskatom
Catskill Game Farm
Hunter
Tannersville
Haines Falls
Palenville
Cairo
S. Cairo
Durham
Cornwallville
East Windham
Ashland
Red Falls
Windham
Hensonville
Maplecrest
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Leeds
Athens
Coxsackie
Freehold
Surprise
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Earlton
Norton Hill
East Durham
Greenville
Grapeville
Van Buren Point
Stuyvesant
Kinderhook
Valatie
Old Chatham
Chatham
Niverville
Lake Taghkanic
Shaker Museum
Malden Bridge
Brainard
Austerlitz
Spencertown
Ancram
Taconic State Park
Jackson Cors.
Mt. Ross
Red Hook
Rock City
Lake Katrine
Barrytown
Annandale-on-Hudson
Upper Red Hook
Tivoli
Madalin
Elizaville

3. If the library staff is competent and willing to press for interlibrary loan service

Any one factor, or all three, are reason enough for the student to library-hop. For although it is recognized that the closer the library is to the patron the more use he will make of it; proximity is not the determining reason: service is the measure.

Every library reported the same desire for prompt service on the part of commuting students; ready reference immediately, reference in depth in a matter of days, books in special fields within a week. *Emerging Library Systems* describes the situation,

> The effective use of libraries which are physically remote from the user also depends on how well he is able to identify the precise materials which will meet his particular library need. There is a serious lack of those kinds of bibliographic tools--especially in the area of books, government documents, and pamphlet material. Even the few which do exist are not available in the local libraries to the extent that they should be, and staffs are not adequately trained in their use. (VI-40)[5]

The two counties subject to this study that are experiencing the greatest pressures in service to commuting students are Orange and Rockland. Rockland County is in rapid development as a next-door neighbor to Westchester and New York. A large proportion of its residents have divided careers in work and study. Orange County is just beginning to receive the overflow of Rockland's booming population and anticipates a quick growth in the next ten years. Sullivan and Ulster are not yet burdened with services required by mushrooming populations, although two community colleges have recently opened their doors to a commuting student body.

What are the attitudes of commuting students using public libraries versus the attitudes towards their academic libraries?

Public librarians complained that there would be no problems in services to students if colleges were offering the necessary service on campus. Failure of the colleges to conveniently provide library services places the responsibility on other libraries that have no obligation to provide curricular related services, or that are not really equipped to do so. In fairness to academic institutions one must acknowledge the difficulties involved in the build-up of book and periodical collections, the construction of

new library facilities, and the desire to enlarge staff in spite of a shortage of professional librarians.

The key word in the consideration is *convenience*. The commuting student has unique and painful problems of time, costs, and efforts that must somehow fit into a tight schedule of conflicting roles that require different, but pressing responsibilities. Consider the student who lives in Woodbourne as a family member, works in Tuxedo Park as a professional teacher, takes a course at Paterson State in New Jersey for a Master's degree, and you have the hectic composite that is the commuting student. This student will use the handiest library, but will be willing to library-hop if he can locate the materials he needs.

College librarians feel that they build collections for student use and that students should make full use of library facilities before complaints are voiced. That is fairly so for campus students. On the other hand, one must listen to the complaints of the commuter who says that Sunday is the only full afternoon he can do research, but then the college library is not open. Thrall Library in Middletown is within walking distance of Orange County Community College, and is open from one until five on Sunday afternoons. Students are waiting to get in at twelve-thirty when the college library does not open on Sunday afternoons. Inconvenience of library hours was the greatest complaint from students who work nights as well as from students who work days and attempt to get an education to better themselves.

There were no complaints from students interviewed concerning college library resources. The problem appears to be a difficulty of access and prompt service. Poor locational devices in large libraries confused students with limited time. Reserve collections stymied library use, and book stores were not open to accommodate students who preferred purchasing a book to waiting in the reserve section for its use. General reading lists and supplementary reading lists should contain more titles; professors often gave a list of ten titles to forty students with a time limit of two or three weeks.

The need for periodical and journal literature is a major pressure point in these library services. Again, travel, time, and access are linked in the research necessary for the acquisition of the journal itself, or for a copy of a journal article. Both college and public library services seem vulnerable to criticism on this score. More titles and better inventories are needed.

In very large libraries, some students found the divided catalog less convenient to use than the library catalog. "I like things together", said one student who became annoyed at the time wasted in walking from hall to hall.

The open/closed stack debate continues in the library

profession, but the student who is pressed for time prefers the open stack system for his own convenience. There is a need for more competent introductions to library techniques and arrangements. One student suggested that both college and public libraries should present printed guides and manuals for library use that state policies, locate materials, and show floor plans.

Commuting students expressed appreciation for the flavor of personal service in smaller public libraries where the staff attempts to help them despite limited collections. To a student, it must seem peculiar indeed that his local librarian can frequently obtain materials on interlibrary loan from his college that he himself cannot charge out there.

When one considers the reasons for student use of public libraries--"It is closer", "It's open nights and Sundays", "The librarian is helpful", "I can charge out the books", "There's more parking space"--one recognizes again that convenience is the key word. Perhaps a fresh view is necessary for all librarians; what is offered may not be what is needed by commuting students who are shaping new service demands.

What is the degree of hardship imposed upon local public libraries by student demands for services and materials?

The greatest hardship is the need for staff for reference and research in the key libraries. Bibliographic tools demand competent searching or precious time is wasted. There are few professional librarians in the total number of libraries in Orange, Rockland, Sullivan and Ulster Counties. Telephone reference services have been encouraged for these four counties at the public library system headquarters, but it has not yet proved itself entirely satisfactory. There is still confusion at both levels. In community libraries, untrained staff with inadequate tools cannot interpret a patron's needs properly. Indeed, many are incapable of conducting a reference interview in order to clarify research requirements.

Emerging Library Systems makes this observation,

> There is little question that the most significant fact in the public library picture at this point is the shift to a volume of student use which amounts to from 50 to 60 percent of the total use of adult materials in many of the better libraries. (XII-4)[5]

Better libraries must bear the burden of the library-hopper who looks for competent staffs to guide him to information sources.

For these libraries this means increased hours of opening, the acquisition of more reference tools, hiring of part-time people to cover peak loads; and the costs of all must be borne by limited tax areas. Of the chartered libraries in New York State, 62% serve less than 5,000 population areas which are permitted by their charter to adhere to "minimum" standards of service. A few of these small libraries are coping with the costs and the demands of library services, but the majority of them renege on service demands and let other libraries assume the responsibilities of service in depth.

One does not expect the community library to have everything, for duplication can be a waste of financial resources; but staff training is a high priority, and the acquisition of the essential indexes is needed in too many of the smaller libraries.

Joseph Eisner's study[1] of the Ramapo Catskill Library System suggested that "district libraries" be designated and recognized as a step above community libraries. It is time to implement that suggestion.

How well does the public library fill student demands?

The *why* and the *how* lead inevitably to the *how well*. The responses of individual users ranged from the caustic to some of genuine enthusiasm. No one library patron can be a judge of the over-all performance of a public library, regardless of its size. He knows only how well he is served. The weightier opinion must be that of the personnel who work daily filling the reference and research requests of commuting students.

Librarians, in their turn, were particularly critical of the assignments given to students. Professors' bibliographies were too frequently out of date and inaccurate. Public librarians would have college librarians check the methods instructors use in compiling bibliographies, permit and advise public librarians to make substitutions of comparable titles, and educate faculty members in the use of the library.

Reserve collections in college libraries appear to limit use by commuting students. A control is certainly necessary, however, or all titles would be charged out immediately. Key public library directors were asked if they would shelve duplicate reserve collections if lent by area colleges. Disappointingly, there was no consensus:

1. Use is doubtful; perhaps college to college would be better.

2. Great idea, but must permit library to circulate titles on short-term charge-outs.
3. No. The inconvenience posed by college libraries is not the responsibility of the public library.
4. Already do this with area college, quasi-permanent basis; interfiled with regular collection.

Perhaps other small public libraries rather than the key libraries feel a greater need and could work out a cooperative agreement for shelving reserve titles as listed in the Southeastern New York Library Resources Council's publication *An Area List of Reserved Book Collections in College Libraries*[7]. The proposed "district" libraries could perform this function.

Public library directors were asked to express their opinions in the use of reading lists if they could be regularly supplied by college faculty. Their replies were

1. Don't bother. *We* don't need them.
2. They are no help; nor would we use them as selection tools. They do not fill our needs.
3. Send them in. We need them. Also course outlines.
4. We use them. We check the catalog to see what we have. Also check some titles for possible purchase if reviews warrant it.

There is a necessity for a closer cooperation between college and public libraries to cope with difficulties associated with rapid urban and suburban growth caught at several levels of development. Rockland County has no more room for growth and must devise such services. Orange County is growing and must soon institute such services. Sullivan County can look to future growth and should profit from the experiences of Rockland and Orange. Ulster County is still largely rural, but it is also part of the greater metropolitan pattern and should work closely with Sullivan to develop paired services rather than a duplication.

In this mixed environment no definite patterns of students' use could be traced. The largest single group that pressured a public library was reported by Mr. Robert Ake of the Finkelstein Memorial Library. He could identify these as students in education in the largest numbers, followed by students in sociology and psychology. Materials to supply the students taking education courses at all levels would probably be too specialized for public library collections. Over the past several years various plans have been put forward for the establishment of an extensive professional library to be used by any teacher or student in education in Rockland County, but today the problem remains unsolved.

Services to commuting students involve library time, staff, and materials. Public library system services should supplement the local library as needed; the open door to a public library is

access to an entire system. But systems occasionally fail because of their own inadequacies of staff, time, and materials. Administrators of library budgets must take caution, for the commuting student that library hops today has already developed a habit that will control his library informational needs when he becomes active in industry, business, or the professions. Discreet tax areas which support libraries of limited access are not part of his rationale.

The results of the interviews are these: Public libraries are not filling student demands adequately. Materials are not available promptly. Personnel are not always enthusiastic and competent. Costs are rising and public libraries are always shy of asking for proper support. Service to commuting students at best is given grudgingly in the majority of public libraries. And, support will be forthcoming when a community recognizes the library's functions as a vital resource.

Is there a possibility of change in the relationship of the public library to the educational system as structured by the New York State Education Department?

These evidences indicate a transition in the character of the libraries' public and its needs that the libraries themselves are not now prepared to serve. With variations, the problems encountered in Rockland, Orange, Sullivan, and Ulster counties must be repeated over the entire state with its increasing academic population and new community colleges. The implications, therefore, are predictably statewide rather than regional.

Libraries have developed from individual private and society libraries to public institutions with fragmented support and diverse memberships. With great foresight New York State recognized the need for a loose framework that would permit individual growth while supporting and utilizing cooperative efforts. The New York State Library network of inter-library loans led to the library system concept, which in turn produced the Reference and Research Library Resources Program now effective in the nine research library resources systems. Each step has led to finer distribution of library services to the citizens of New York State. It appears now to be the time for a concern for closer cooperation between public libraries in carefully defined patterns of service to meet user needs.

Emerging Library Systems asks the pertinent questions.

> Is the student load likely to continue? Is serving students a proper role for the public

> library, and if so what specifically should the public library's special contribution be in relation to other libraries? What changes need to be made in the public libraries' traditional service program to best meet student needs? (V-17)[5]

The product of this enquiry is that the library uses of the college student are a matter of community concern because responsibility cannot be successfully consigned to the college at which he is matriculated. More consideration is needed of what is and has been a neglected problem.

III

Recommendations

1. A survey should be made in all public libraries to identify commuting students who use public library facilities.

2. The study of the possibility of designating district libraries in defined geographical areas (possibly by county) based upon size of collection and professional staff.

3. A study of the feasibility of increased and expanded telephone reference service among public libraries (or at least among designated district libraries).

4. The development of scattered collections (possibly in designated district libraries) that would contain popular titles often found on college reserve lists.

5. Financial restitution or a reimbursement program to those libraries pressured by increased costs directly related to services offered to commuting students.

6. A review of the hours of service offered by all college and public libraries to help determine where longer hours or a rearrangement of hours might aid the commuting student.

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